**INFLUENCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES ON IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KANDUYI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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# INFLUENCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES ON IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KANDUYI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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**ABSTRACT**

*Despite the apparent familiarity with the concept of inclusive education (IE), there is still inconsistency in integrating it at the level of policy development and implementation. The objective of the study therefore, was to establish the extent to which teaching and learning approaches influence the implementation of IE programme among 6-9 years old pupils in public primary schools in Kanduyi sub-county, Bungoma County, Kenya. This study was guided by social disability theory. It employed the descriptive survey research design and targeted 275 respondents comprising of 99 head teachers, 40 Special Needs Education (SNE) teachers and 136 lower primary class teachers. The study sampled 30% of the 275 respondents to get a sample of 83 respondents. In this study, the research instruments used were questionnaires and interview guides. The study tested the tools' content, criterion and construct validity while the reliability of the questionnaire was determined through the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the internal consistency. The findings of the pilot study showed that all the three scales were reliable as their reliability values were above the prescribed threshold of 0.7. Quantitative data was analyzed using such descriptive statistics as frequency counts, percentages and means while inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analysis was employed. Qualitative data was put into various categories and reported in an ongoing process as themes and sub-themes emerged for each of the objectives. Analyzed data was presented using charts, graphs and tables. The findings indicated that there was a strong positive and significant relationship between teaching approaches and implementation of inclusive education programme in lower public primary schools. Based on the study results, it was recommended that there is need to ensure that effective learning approaches suitable for implementing IE are used. Also, the curriculum should be made flexible and avail adequate facilities and visual aids.*

*Key words: Inclusive Education, Teaching Approaches, Implementation of Inclusive Education*

**INTRODUCTION**

Inclusive Education (IE) has become a significant issue within the international development sector and has grown to become a familiar term (Urwick & Elliott, 2010). The term has been defined as all children being educated where they would be educated if they did not have a disability, that is, in age appropriate general classes in their neighborhood school with necessary support provided to children, educators and families so that all can be successful (Dukes & Lamar –Dukes, 2016). Inclusion can start very early in life. A holistic lifelong vision of education is therefore imperative including acknowledging the importance of early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes to improve children's well-being, prepare them for primary school and give them a better chance of succeeding once they are in school. Subsequently, linking inclusion to broader development goals contributes to the development and reform of education systems, poverty alleviation and to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (Policy Guidelines on Inclusive Education, 2018).

There are a number of international agreements that support the view that compulsory segregation in education is against children's and young people's basic human rights. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), World Declaration for Education for Persons (1990), The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in USA (1990), Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994), the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). All these international agreements advocate for inclusive education and are explicit on the urgency of implementing education systems that enable all children to access formal education. A study conducted in Russia yielded appalling results in the OECD'S PISA assessment in 2000 (Agranovich & Kozhevnikova, 2016). There was a push for standards –based reforms and unification which impacted among other education sectors, special education. This led to the development of the federal standards for special education (SFGOS), Enrolment in special schools and community involvement increased indicating that inclusive practices were heading towards a commendable status. The Institute of Correctional Pedagogy (2018) took up responsibility of offering testing, diagnostic, and referral services for every child to benefit from government research, a step though still undergoing reform has impacted positively on Russian performance in terms of holistic competencies.

In South Africa, after the end of the apartheid era, the new government that came to power in the mid1990s developed the White Paper No 6 entitled "*Special needs education, building an inclusive education and training system that provides a framework for systematic change for development of inclusive education*" (Engelbrencht, Howell, & Bassett, 2018). In Botswana, the Ministry of Education has introduced School Intervention Teams (SIT), which is school based resource services for assisting and advising teachers who have children with special needs education in their classes. Normally the head teachers, senior teachers, a social worker and individual child's parent form the team. In this study, there was need to establish if there were any intervention measures to help teachers perceive learners with disabilities positively as they teach them in the class room.

In Tanzania, IE is perceived to mean essential human right, a force for social change and vital means for combating poverty, empowering the marginalized, safeguarding children from exploitation and promoting democracy, and protecting the environment. Schools are encouraged to accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social or other conditions within their environment. This was presented during the Regional Seminar, Sponsored by UNESCO entitled "*Poverty Alleviation, HIV and AIDS, Education and Inclusive Education*: UNESCO

(2017). According to Mwesigye (2013), Uganda has established a model school, "*Hill Preparatory school (HPS)*" that has been providing IE for the last 25 years where each child receives due attention and learners with disabilities share a lot with regular pupils in the mainstream classes. Inclusive education emphasizes that differences and diversities in children must be respected and that no two children are the same in their learning characteristics. The aspect of learners sharing is what is unknown in the learners in Kenyan public primary schools because this virtue is likely to promote the positive perception of learners without disabilities towards learners with disabilities (UNESCO, 2017).

Every Kenyan has a right to education, a right that is enshrined in the constitution. It is with this in mind that, in 2010, the government committed to providing free primary education, as well as including persons with any sort of disability in education and training. In addition, the objectives of SNE in Kenya are to facilitate the development of all learners with special needs spiritually, mentally, socially and physically (Ministry of Education, 2017).The objectives stated above have clear focus on the implementation of IE in the educational system. While commenting on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Ochina (2015) emphasized the need for such persons to be included in all spheres of life in the society. According to the Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities (2018), there are more than a million persons living with disabilities in Kenya. However, far too many of them face barriers to inclusion in many key aspects of society. This includes education, transportation, and employment, social and political participation. As a result, they don't enjoy access to society on an equal basis with the rest of society. This right to participate in public life is essential to create stable democracies, active citizenship, and reduce inequality.

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2012) reveals that about a third (30.3%) of children with disabilities were attending school while 21.0% never attended school. One in five children with disabilities attending school had physical disability, followed by those with visual impairment, 19.4%, and hearing impairment, 19.3%. The least proportion of CWDs attending school had self-care difficulties, 2.5%. Only a small proportion of PWDs reached primary school, 2.4%, or tertiary/college, 2.6%. More males than females reached these levels; and more female PWDs than male PWDs never attended school. This is the reason why the researcher sought to establish the determinants of implementation of IE in order to look for long lasting solutions for persons with disabilities (KNBS, 2012).

Bungoma County had a total of 240 public schools and only 3 inclusive schools in the year 2016 during the survey. The County was in the 7th position out of 47 counties in the number of public primary schools after Kisii county 317, Makueni County 311, Kakamega County 297, Machakos County 269, Kitui County 265, and Murang'a 263 (Ministry of Education, 2014). The figures given for IE are contrary to the National Special Needs Education Policy Framework (2009) that emphasized IE in all public primary schools since they show high levels of non-inclusion hence the need to establish the determinants of implementation of the same.

In this study, teaching approaches are considered to be techniques that a teacher embraces during the teaching and learning process to ensure optimal delivery. Studies suggest that teaching approaches are generally very important in ensuring efficiency in inclusivity of education (Magana & Ostrosky, 2018). Significantly, teachers who have a major special education component to their training are much more likely to display a diverse pedagogy of delivery for inclusive education and report higher self-efficacy around adapting classroom practices. Likewise the more knowledge teachers have about specific impairment the more positive they tend to report feelings towards inclusion (Malak 2017).

## Statement of the problem

There is an increasing global awareness and call for disability mainstreaming and inclusivity in education. However, it's important to note that there is inconsistency in understanding IE at the level of policy development and implementation. In Kenya 1,504 (0.48 %) out of the 315, 000 pupils with disabilities in public primary schools were in the IE programme. A baseline survey conducted in Bungoma County between 2013 and 2016 indicated that only 107(0.07%) pupils with visual impairments and physical challenges were in the IE programme compared with the 39,122 with disabilities who were out of school. Therefore, this meant that very few pupils with disabilities (PWDs) were admitted in public primary schools in Bungoma County. In particular, a few studies in Kanduyi sub-county majorly focused on the causes of forms of disabilities such as epilepsy, physical disability and specific learning difficulties. However, none of such studies had investigated the determinants that influence the IE programmes among 6-9 year old pupils in public primary schools. It was out of this scenario that the researcher was motivated to investigate into the determinants of implementing the IE Programme among 6-9 year old pupils in public primary schools in Kanduyi Sub-county.

## Objective of the study

The objective of the study was to establish the extent to which teaching and learning approaches influence the implementation of the IE programme among 6-9 year old pupils in public primary schools in Kanduyi Sub-County, Bungoma County, Kenya.

The study was based on the following null hypothesis.

- **Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between teaching and learning approaches and implementation of IE programme among 6-9 year old pupils in public primary schools in Kanduyi sub-county, Bungoma County, Kenya.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was informed by the social theory of disability as advanced by Mike Oliver in 1980. The theory is a reaction to the dominant individual medical model of disability, which is a functional analysis of the body as a machine to be fixed in order to conform to normative values. The theory holds that what makes someone disabled is not their medical condition, but the attitudes and structures of society. It identifies systematic barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion by the society (purposefully or inadvertently) that show that the society is the main contributory factor in making people with impairments to be unable to participate fully in society. While physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychological variations may cause individual functional limitation or impairments, these do not necessarily have to lead to disability unless societies fail to take account of and include people regardless of their individual differences. The social model has been developed by academics and activists and applied in many countries in the world, including Australia, UK and US, among others. This theory was being employed to anchor the independent variable of teaching approaches.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used the descriptive survey research design. The design was relevant to this study because the researcher sought to gather a substantial amount of information from relevant stakeholders regarding IE implementation. The study was carried out in lower public primary schools in Kanduyi, one of the nine sub-counties that form Bungoma County in Kenya. The study area was purposely chosen because from the literature reviewed, no study had been done concerning the determinants of implementing the IE programme among 6-9 year olds in the sub-County.

The study targeted 275 respondents comprising of 99 head teachers, 40 SNE teachers and 136 lower public primary class teachers. The study sampled 30% of 275 the population to get a sample of 83 respondents. Purposive and simple random sampling was used to select the public primary schools and the categories of respondents included in the sample. Lower public primary schools were

selected using systematic random sampling because they all offered inclusive education. Purposive sampling was used to select SNE teachers because they stood to give more reliable responses owing to their long stay in this field. Simple random sampling was also used to select the lower public primary class teachers. In this study, the research instruments included questionnaires and interview guides. Their selection was guided by the research nature, kind of data to be collected, time available, purpose and the specific objective of the study.

In the pre-test of the research instruments, 8 class teachers and 8 SNE teachers were selected from two lower public primary schools in the sub-county. The study tested content, criterion and construct validity. The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha coefficient which measures the internal consistency. The coefficient measures internal consistency by establishing if certain item measures the same construct. The findings of the pilot study showed that all the three scales were reliable as their reliability values exceeded the prescribed threshold of 0.7. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages and means and inferential statistics using correlation and regression analysis. Qualitative data was put into various categories and reported in an ongoing process as themes and sub-themes emerged. Analyzed data was presented using charts, graphs and APA tables.

## FINDINGS

### Descriptive statistics results of teaching and learning approaches on implementation of the IE programme

The study sought to establish the influence of teaching and learning approaches on implementation of inclusive education in lower public primary schools in Kanduyi Sub-County, Bungoma County. In particular, the study sought to assess the effect of teaching and learning approaches on the implementation of inclusive education programme to those pupils with special needs. In order to meet the objective, the respondents were provided with a list of statements and asked to rate them. The study parameters were: 1=Strongly Agree (SA); 2=Agree (A); 3=Undecided (U); 4=Disagree (D); and 5=Strongly Disagree (SD). A summary of the findings is as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Responses on Teaching and learning approaches on implementation of inclusive education**

| Statement | N | SA (%) | A (%) | U (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pupils in my class have the opportunity to interact with classmates, friends, peers and teachers in school environment e.g. in the classroom, playgrounds, assembly, etc. | 76 | 47 (61.8) | 27 (35.5) | 2 (2.6) | 0 (0.0) | 0 (0.0) | 1.41 | 0.546 |
| My school curriculum is flexible and responds to diverse abilities, needs and circumstances of all pupils' e.g. academic trips, sporting/out-door activities, creative activities including music and drama. | 76 | 38 (50.0) | 19 (25.0) | 4 (5.3) | 15 (19.7) | 0 (0.0) | 1.95 | 1.165 |
| Teaching approaches adopted by most teachers in my school are pupil-friendly and responsive to diverse needs and learning abilities of all pupils e.g. project-based work, play-based work, etc. | 76 | 28 (36.8) | 32 (42.1) | 8 (10.5) | 8 (10.5) | 0 (0.0) | 1.95 | 0.951 |

| Statement | N | | | | | | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| My school environment is physically accessible to all pupils e.g. there are ramps, walk ways, corridors etc. | 76 | 23 (30.3) | 30 (39.5) | 0 (0.0) | 15 (19.7) | 8 (10.5) | 2.41 | 1.378 |
| Teaching and learning resources are used to stimulate and respond to individual needs and abilities of all pupils in my school e.g. Braille, different prints, hearing aids, child-sized seats and comfortable desks, etc | 76 | 9 (11.8) | 12 (15.8) | 10 (13.2) | 19 (25.0) | 26 (34.2) | 3.54 | 1.409 |
| I use large prints in class | 76 | 12 (15.8) | 20 (26.3) | 7 (9.2) | 31 (40.8) | 6 (7.9) | 2.99 | 1.281 |
| I use visual aids in class. | 76 | 2 (2.6) | 12 (15.8) | 7 (9.2) | 33 (43.4) | 22 (28.9) | 3.80 | 1.108 |
| I organize for individual education program for slow learners. | 76 | 14 (18.4) | 46 (60.5) | 0 (0.0) | 12 (15.8) | 4 (5.3) | 2.29 | 1.105 |

**Source: (Researcher, 2019)**

According to the study findings, majority of the teachers strongly agreed 47(61.8%) while 27(35.5%) agreed that pupils in their classes had the opportunity to interact with their classmates, friends, peers and teachers in the school environment, for example, in the classroom, playgrounds as well as assembly. This is indicated by a mean of 1.41 and standard deviation of 0.546. This findings demonstrated that generally in all the schools, pupils have an opportunity to interact with each other which promotes a conducive learning environment. The teachers also strongly agreed 38(50.0%) that their school curriculum was flexible and responded to diverse abilities, needs and circumstances of all pupils as indicated by a mean of 1.95 and standard deviation of 1.165. These included academic trips, sporting/out-door activities, creative activities such as drama and music. In support of the same, 19(25%) others agreed that their curriculum is flexible and diverse. However, 15(19.7%) disagreed about the flexibility and diversity of the curriculum. This indicated that majority of the schools had a flexible and diverse curriculum but some still had not met the requirement. The results were supported by the opinions obtained during the interviews where majority revealed that they dealt with children in an inclusive classroom individually. Thus this showed that they were able to meet there individual unique needs effectively.

Another 28(36.8%) teachers strongly agreed while 32(42.1%) of them agreed that teaching approaches adopted by most teachers in their schools are pupil-friendly and responsive to diverse needs and learning abilities of all pupils as depicted by a mean of 1.95 and standard deviation of 0.951. There were 8(10.5%) of teachers who disagreed with the statement and 8(10.5%) were undecided. These adopted teaching approaches include project-based work and play-based work. During the interviews, some teachers said that they lacked teaching materials thus posing a challenge to the teaching process. Therefore, this may be the reason why there were reports of lack of pupil friendly teaching environment. Majority of the teachers agreed 30(39.5%) that their school environment is physically accessible to all pupils; this was depicted by a mean of 2.41 and standard deviation of 1.378. These facilities include ramps, walk ways and corridors. However, 15(19.5%) teachers disagreed that the schools environment is physically accessible with 8(10.5%) strongly disagreeing.

Majority of the teachers strongly disagreed 26(34.2%) while 19(25%) disagreed that teaching and learning resources are used to stimulate and respond to individual needs and abilities of all

pupils in their school. This was indicated by a mean of 3.54 and standard deviation of 1.409. However, 12(15.8%) and 9(11.8%) agreed and strongly agreed, respectively with the statement. These learning resources include Braille, different prints, hearing aids, child-sized seats and comfortable desks. The results show that either the teaching or learning materials are available orarenot being used properly or they are not available in the schools. The majority of the teachers also disagreed 31(40.8%) that there is use of large prints in classes to cater for the needs of those with visual impairments. This was depicted by a mean of 2.99 and standard deviation of 1.281. However, 20(26.3%) of the teachers agreed that they use large prints in their classrooms. Majority of the teachers disagreed 33(43.4%) while 22(28.9%) strongly disagreed that there is use of visual aids in class as indicated by a mean of 3.80 and standard deviation of 1.108. Finally, 46(60.5%) of the teachers agreed that they usually organize for individual education programme for slow learners in their class; 14(18.4%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the same as indicated by a mean of 2.29 and standard deviation of 1.105. But, 12(15.8%) disagreed and 4(5.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Findings from interviews revealed that pupils in their schools had the opportunity to interact with classmates, friends, peers and teachers in school environment, for example, in the classroom, playgrounds and assembly; their school curriculum is flexible and responds to diverse abilities, needs and circumstances of all pupils, including academic trips, sporting/out-door activities, creative activities including music and drama and that the teaching approaches adopted by most teachers in the school are pupil-friendly and responsive to diverse needs and learning abilities of all pupils. This was in respect to project-based work and play-based work, among others. It also sought information on whether the school environment is physically accessible to all pupils, for example, the presence of ramps, walk ways and corridors, among others. One

of the respondents said: 'Our *teachers employ diverse pedagogical approaches in delivery curriculum with regard to inclusive education. The needs of both the special needs learners and those of regular learners are ultimately an essential consideration in their teaching process.*' (Interviewee 333, 2020)

The above findings were further supported by previous studies. For instance, in a study by Manisah, Ram lee and Zalizan (2016) on teaching approaches towards inclusive education in Malaysia, it was established that collaboration between special education teachers and regular teachers is vital in the implementation of the inclusive programme. However, the findings indicated that the presence of a special education teacher in regular classrooms could raise difficulties in determining who really is responsible for the special students, though majority of the teachers concurred that the role of special education teacher is to assist the pupils with disability. Manisah, Ram, Lee &Zalizan (2016) felt that the success of the inclusive programme depends, among other factors, on the attitudes of classroom teachers towards the children with special needs teachers. They pointed out that the aspect of collaboration between mainstream and special education teacher needs to be improved.

### Inferential statistics results of effect of teaching approaches on implementation of inclusive education programme

The study sought to test the following hypothesis:

$H_{01}$: There is no significant statistical effect of teaching approaches on implementation of inclusive education programme.

This was accomplished by use of Pearson correlation (r) and linear simple regression ($R^2$) with the aid of SPSS version 22.

The Pearson correlation analysis was used to investigate the relationship between teaching approaches and implementation of inclusive education programme. In investigating the influence of teaching approaches on the implementation of inclusive education programme,

the study established a coefficient of correlation (r) as 0.414**, P<0.01. This showed that there exists a significant positive relationship between teaching approaches and implementation of inclusive education programme. This implied that the implementation of inclusive education programme is enhanced with increase in the variety of the teaching approaches used.

Regression was carried out to examine how teaching approaches affect implementation of the inclusive education programme. The detailed results of simple linear regression analysis involving teaching approaches and implementation of inclusive education programme is as shown in Table 2 which is a composite table comprising of the model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficients.

**Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis Results**

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .414[a] | .171 | .158 | .56937 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), teaching approaches
b. Dependent Variable: Implementation of inclusive education programme

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Regression | 4.227 | 1 | 4.227 | 13.040 | .001[b] |
| 1 | Residual | 20.423 | 337 | .324 | | |
| | Total | 24.651 | 338 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of inclusive education programme
b. Predictors: (Constant), teaching approaches

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | .4.835 | .222 | | 21.752 | .000 |
| Teaching approaches | -.285 | .079 | -.414 | -3.484 | .001 |

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of inclusive education programme

The proportion of variance in implementation of inclusive education programme explained by the independent variable (teaching approaches) is 17.1% or $R^2$=0.171. From the findings, the F ratio was greater than 1, as indicated by a value of 13.040, which meant that improvement due to fitting the model is much greater than the model inaccuracies (F(1,75)= 13.040, P=0.001). This implied that teaching approaches are useful predictor of implementation of inclusive education programme.

Teaching approaches had positive significant predictive power while the constant carried positive and significant value. The B coefficient of teaching approaches was -0.285. This value is significant (B=-.285, p=.001) implying that a unit change in

teaching approaches would result to significant change in implementation of inclusive education programme by 0.285 in the opposite direction. That is, increase in teaching approaches by a unit would result to increase in implementation of inclusive education programme by 0.285 and decrease in teaching approaches by a unit would result to increase in implementation of inclusive education programme by 0.285. Therefore, the linear regression results indicated that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between teaching approaches and implementation of inclusive education programme.

The study derived an analytical model for predicting implementation of inclusive education programme from teaching approaches, as presented below:

**Implementation of inclusive education programme=4.835-0.285X₃**

From the results, teaching approaches had significant positive effect on implementation of inclusive education programme with P<0.01 and it significantly accounted 17.1% variance in implementation of inclusive education programme.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study sought to establish the influence of teaching and learning approaches on implementation of inclusive education in lower public primary schools in Kanduyi Sub-County, Bungoma County. The findings indicated that there was a strong positive and significant relationship between teaching approaches and implementation of inclusive education programme in lower public primary schools. This implied that increased teaching approaches result in an increased implementation of inclusive education in schools.

From the results, teaching approaches had significant positive effect on implementation of inclusive education programme with P<0.01 and it significantly accounted for 66.3% variance in implementation of inclusive education programme. Thus, for successful implementation of IE, teaching resources are key in ensuring Inclusive education.

Based on the study objective, the researcher made the following recommendations:

- Teacher training is essential in SNE to empower teachers with knowledge, skills, values and right skills towards the implementation of inclusive education.
- Teachers and education officers should attend in-service training through short courses, seminars, meetings, conferences and workshops so that they are updated more on special needs education.
- The government should have a budgetary allocation meant for purchasing teaching and learning resources, which will boost the implementation of inclusive education.
- The Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards should also visit the various lower public primary schools to ensure inclusive education is being implemented.

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